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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/812,953	03/31/2004	Toshiaki Takahashi	249593US3	4891
22850	7590	05/30/2006	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			JOERGER, KAITLIN S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3653	

DATE MAILED: 05/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/812,953

Applicant(s)

TAKAHASHI ET AL.

Examiner

Kaitlin S. Joerger

Art Unit

3653

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,8-10,17-19 and 26-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-7,11-16 and 20-25 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 March 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/16/05 8/9/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 8-10, 17-19, and 26-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ito (U.S. Patent No. 6,985,265).

Ito teaches sheet cassette comprising:

- a tray main body, 2; and
- a tray expansion/contraction part, 13a, supported by the tray main body part and configured to slide relative to the tray main body part to a cassette expanded position, figure 20, and a cassette contracted position, figure 18;
- the tray expansion/contraction part comprising a rear end regulation member, 15, configured to be moved in a direction in which recording media stacked in the sheet cassette are fed to regulate rear ends of the recording media and a sliding guide part to support the regulation member to freely slide and to form a moving path of the rear end regulation member, see figure 4;
- holding parts, 41, configured to hold the tray expansion/contraction part at the expanded and contracted position;

Art Unit: 3653

- an indication part, S1 through S6, configured to differentiate a state in which the tray expansion/contraction parts is held by the tray main body part from a state in which the tray expansion/contraction part is released from the tray main body part, and;
- engaging members, 57A, and locking parts configured to engage with and disengage from the engaging members, see figure 18 and 20.

Ito further teaches:

- a feeding roller for feeding the media in the cassette, see figure 1;
- an image forming device configured to form an image, and;
- a plurality of openings below the image forming device and configured to receive a plurality of sheet cassettes, see column 2, lines 61+.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 30 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ito (U.S. Patent No. 6,985,265).

Ito does not specifically teach a method of expanding and contracting a sheet cassette, however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to perform the method of claim 30 using the sheet cassette of Ito in its usual and expected manner as Ito teaches all of the structural features and uses of the claimed sheet cassette.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2-7, 11-16, and 20-25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 2, 11, and 20 are indicated as having allowable subject matter because the prior art of record does not teach or render obvious the combination claimed, wherein the cassette further comprises an auxiliary member configured to be attached, when the tray expansion/contraction part is in the cassette expanded position, to the sliding guide part to extend its length.

Claims 3, 12, and 22 are indicated as having allowable subject matter because the prior art of record does not teach or render obvious the combination claimed, wherein the cassette further comprises a fall-off prevention member provided to an end part of the sliding guide part of the tray expansion/contraction part configured to prevent the rear end regulation member from falling off the sliding guide part.

Claims 4, 13, and 23 are indicated as having allowable subject matter because the prior art of record does not teach or render obvious the combination claimed, wherein the cassette further comprises a reinforcing member provided to a backside of the tray expansion/contraction part.

Conclusion

Art Unit: 3653

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The other prior art made of record are additional examples of sheet cassette with an expansion/contraction part.

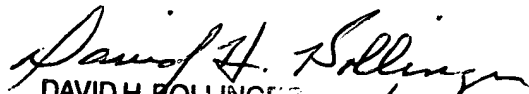
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kaitlin S. Joerger whose telephone number is 571-272-6938. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eileen Lillis can be reached on 571-272-6928. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

ksj5


18 May 2006


DAVID H. BOLLINGER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
5/25/06